Adult Spelling Bee Virtually!

Seminole County Public Library

Adults

|

Intergenerational

Adult Spelling Bee Virtually!

Dec 10, 2020

Free

Byline

Amy Cantley, Adult Services Librarian, Seminole County Public Library, Sanford, Fla.

Adult Spelling Bee Virtually! is a friendly competition conducted in three rounds of easy, intermediate and advanced words.

The program's goal was to bring community members together for some fun competition and companionship as a diversion from the current pandemic.

Advanced Planning

After the program was approved by library management, I was responsible for preparing and hosting it. Planning began two months in advance and consisted mainly of selecting words and gathering definitions, parts of speech and sentences using the Merriam-Webster online dictionary. Rules for competition were also communicated to participants as they registered for the event.

Staffing to cover reference desk had to be arranged while I was hosting the event.

Marketing

Marketing materials consisted of large poster for the North branch, fliers for all branches, and social media postings on Facebook and Nextdoor.

The poster and fliers were available and posted a month before the event. Social media postings occurred on multiple dates closer to the event with several in the week before the event.

Several interested patrons approached staff in the branch with questions about the event. However, because of patrons' current reluctance to visit the library because of the pandemic, the social media promotion was most successful.

Budgeting

The event cost the library nothing, other than staff time and printing.

Day-of-event Activity

Before the event, the Zoom log-in information was shared with registered participants. Quite a few participants registered late in the day, which required some last-minute work to make sure that all who registered received the log-in information

to participate.

One staff member was responsible for the preparation and presentation. The staff member set up a laptop in a quiet room and began the Zoom session to participants 10 minutes before the scheduled start time.

Program Execution

After welcoming everyone and having brief conversation with participants, which also served as microphone checks, the rules of play were reviewed. The spelling bee began with the easy words. Order of spelling was based on alphabetical order of the spellers' first names.

The spelling bee featured a possible 159 words: 57 easy words, 54 intermediate words and 48 advanced words. The spelling bee was a single-elimination event, and we proceeded through all the easy words before moving on to the intermediate words, then the advanced words.

The words posed more of a challenge to players than planned and we ended up playing two complete games and did not use all the words. Eighteen people participated in the event, and all said they had a great time.

Many participants wanted to know when we were going to host the next spelling bee. The presenter also received several emails the next day, thanking her for the program and improving their vocabulary. The program was a success and is now being scheduled as a quarterly event.

Advice

My advice to others interested in hosting an adult spelling bee would be to select words with different abilities in mind. To keep it fair, have clear rules for play and stick to them.

Remember, though, that this is a fun event and to project a warm and welcoming attitude to participants. Many of the participants had humorous commentaries on some of their assigned words, which added to the program experience for all, I

embraced this as part of the social aspect of the event.

Did you try this program at your library? Share your experience using this form.

Supporting Materials

Document
word_list.pdf
Document
adult_spelling_bee_rules.pdf
Document
spelling_bee.pdf
Download this Program as a PDF

- Programming Librarian Facebook Group

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Star Wars Spelling Bee

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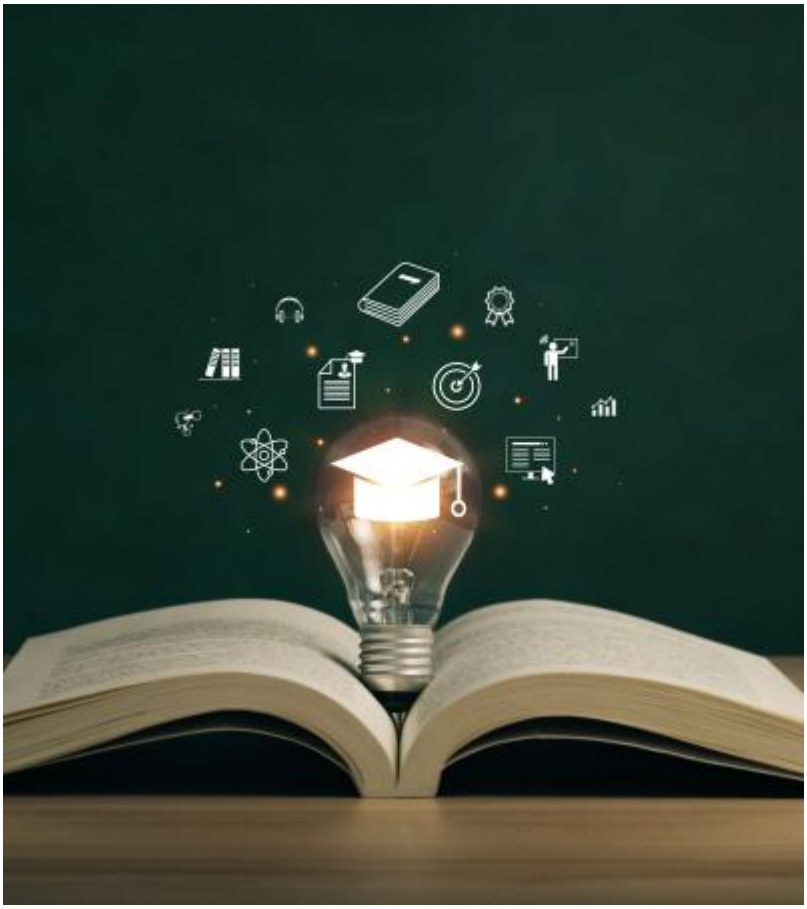
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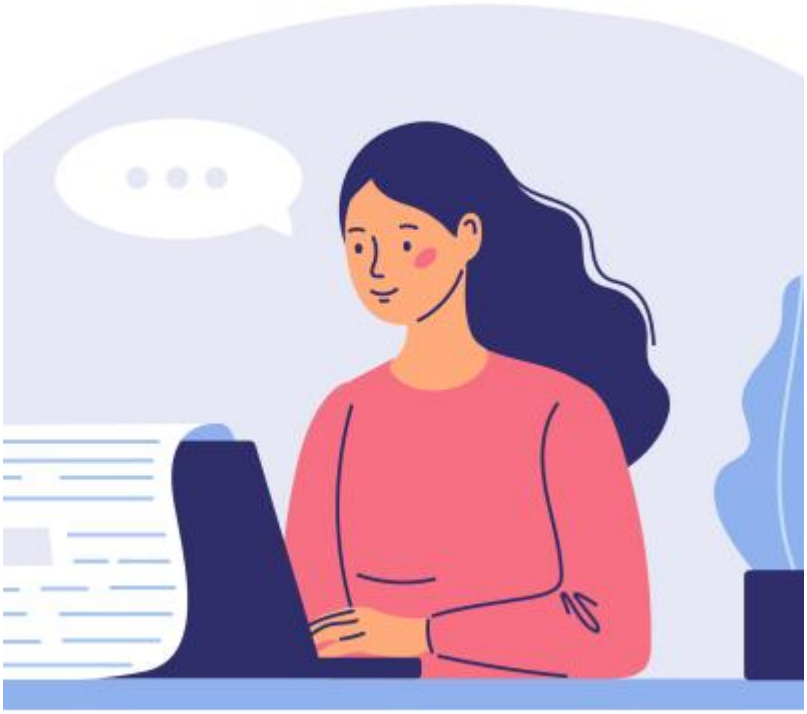
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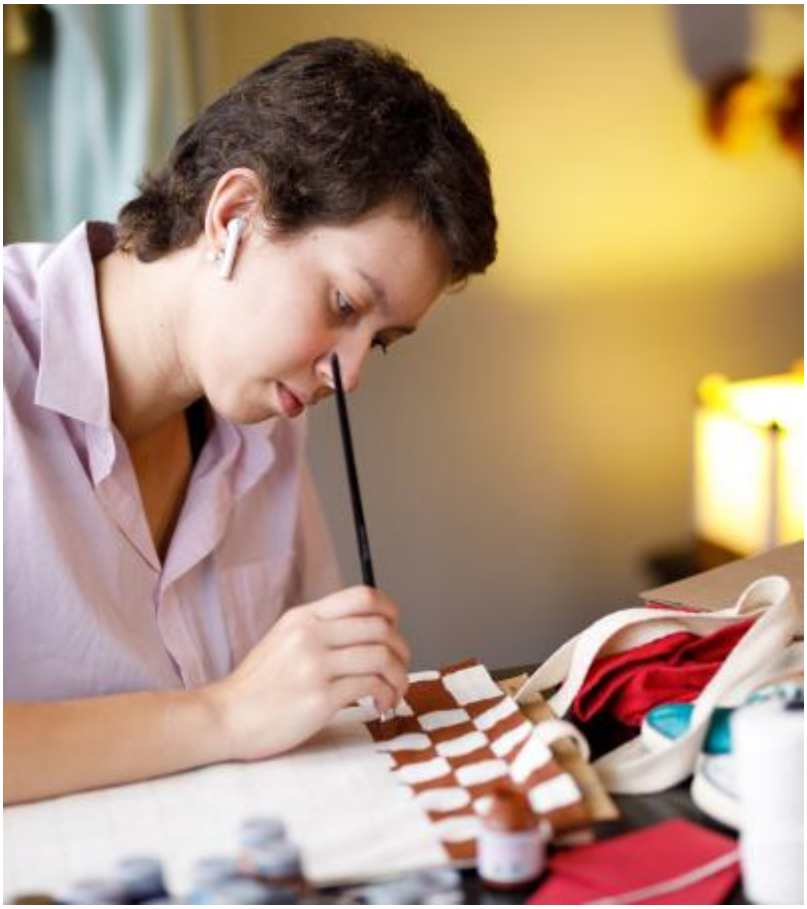
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Virtual Author Chat

Audiences:

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Nov 10, 2020
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